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## HARRIS-AT&T ALLIANCE CONTINUES PARTNERSHIP TREND

Oct 27, 2011 5:54 PM, By Donny Jackson (donald.jackson@penton.com)

This week, commercial wireless giant AT&T and longtime public-safety communications vendor Harris announced an alliance that is designed to bring next-generation LTE solutions to the first-responder sector. (**Click here for related video.**) It's not the first such agreement, but the existence of the new partnership should be welcomed by public-safety entities seeking choices and competition in this nascent market.

It an alliance that is logical, as both entities bring critical components to the arrangement. AT&T knows commercial technology well and is expected to deploy LTE networks sometime next year, while Harris has long been a leader in the public-safety communication market in the private LMR voice world.

"They understand the [public-safety] market," Mobeen Khan, executive director for AT&T's advanced mobility solutions, said of Harris.

AT&T and Harris likely will not announce many product offerings until the second quarter of 2012, but officials for both companies are looking at solutions roadmaps that will leverage best-of-breed offerings from each other and potentially other partners in the future, Khan said.

Earlier this year, **Motorola and Verizon announced a similar arrangement**. Predictably, that alliance has more tangible offerings and plans for public-safety entities to consider at the moment. However, given the fact that there are no more than a handful of early public-safety LTE networks that are expected to be deployed during the next several months, AT&T and Harris should not be harmed materially by offering solutions a little later.

One concern some public-safety industry observers had with working with AT&T was the location of its 700 MHz spectrum. While the Verizon 700 MHz airwaves are located near the public-safety broadband swath, the AT&T spectrum in the lower part of the 700 MHz band — a circumstance that some believed would be detrimental to AT&T's ability to serve the public-safety market.

With modern technological advances, such concerns are a myth, Khan said.

"Multi-frequency and multiprotocol devices have been working in the market for a long period of time," he said. "With the processing speeds and the radio capabilities, that's really a problem that's been solved … so that's really not an issue."

If that's the case, it's good news for the public-safety market. Having the choice of multiple alliances from trusted carriers and vendors is exactly what the first-responder sector needs as it prepares to embrace LTE capabilities. Hopefully, this partnership trend will continue with other similar alliances, so there is greater choice and competition in market.

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